

HISTORY OF JULY 19TH PRODUCTIONS

July 19th Productions was started in 2018 by Charlene Zacks, it's founder. The play Birdseed Confidential then called "Hope and Gloria" was proposed for the 2019 Toronto Fringe Festival. Unfortunately, it did not get in.

In 2019, July 19th produced "Hope and Gloria" as a staged reading at Workman Arts Theatre. With Charlene Zacks as Gloria, and Emily Schooley as the reader.

Later that year, July 19th Productions finally got into The Fringe – The 2020 Fringe. Unfortunately, due to Covid 19, the in-person Fringe was delayed until 2022.

For the next two years and three months "Hope and Gloria" when through several changes. The name was change to "Birdseed Confidential" and went into development for two years.

In 2020 July 19th Productions produced two solo comedy sketches written and starting Charlene Zacks – "Live at the Comedy Nest" and "Reverend Betty Hynn" for The Toronto Fringe Collective a digital version of the 2020 Fringe.

On July 12, 2021, July 19th Productions produced a second staged reading of "Birdseed Confidential", which was virtual on Zoom. It was a big success with lots of feedback from the audience, which was used to do even more re-rewrites.

And now July 19th Productions will be presenting the full length in person version of "Birdseed Confidential".

You may wonder where July 19th Productions got its name from. It was named after the date where Charlene Zacks became a fan of Robin Williams. Robin Williams is a major inspiration for Charlene as a comedy performer.

CHARLENE ZACKS – ACTOR/WRITER

Charlene has been in the business for many years. She started performing in theatrical productions at age nine. Later she moved on to community T.V. where she wrote, produced, and was on air talent both as an interviewer and a comedy performer.

She has acted in numerous plays and musicals and has written and performed various comedy sketches and comedic monologues. She has also successfully tried stand-up comedy at Yuk Yuks. She is currently working both as a writer and actor on her one woman show entitled Birdseed Confidential which is slated to be in the 2022 Toronto Fringe Festival.

She has also been a performer on Ed's Night Party/Ed the Sock both on stage and on City T.V and has acted in numerous films. Her latest film roles have been in Yellow Hyacinths (and the radio version) The Misanthropic Cow, Dough-Re-Mi, TTC, Take the Car, and Adventures of a Hippie Girl (voice acting)

Charlene's current virtual performances have been "Live At The Comedy Nest in a 2020 showcase with Workman Arts, both "Live at the Comedy Nest" and "Reverend Betty

Hynn” both part of The Toronto Fringe Collective in 2020, and recently “Covid Capers” in a 2021 showcase with Workman Arts.

Comedy is Charlene’s forte. She is very influenced by her long-time idol the late (but great) Robin Williams and has had the very fortunate opportunity to meet him a few times. The most memorable time was back in 2008.

Charlene hopes for more success in the business.

ASH C KATE – DIRECTOR/DRAMATURG

ash is a trans mad and disabled actor/director/dancer/writer and visual artist born and raised in Tkaronto. Growing up ash performed in many musicals in their bedroom but in the outside world focused on gymnastics, baseball and diving.

After ‘retiring’ ash began taking dance classes and finally fulfilled a childhood dream performing in the ensemble of “Tommy”, “Kiss of the Spiderwoman”, “Hello Dolly”, “Sound of Music and “Fiddler on the Roof” and a lead role in Emma.

After experiencing some mental health and addiction challenges ash joined Workman Arts and greatly expanded their artistic practice studying acting, directing, improv, film, writing and visual arts. ash is currently working on personal documentary film about their time spent working at the strip club - as well as stop motion animation films starring their very large toy collection.

ash spent the majority of the last few years at home chilling with their best buddy Princess Leia (the cat) and watching the Yankees or Giants.

ARDENE SHAPIRO – MUSIC

Tutored by legendary troubador Townes Van Zandt in the Americana Roots tradition, Toronto native Ardene Shapiro has shared stages with Ron Sexsmith and Mary Margaret O'Hara among others. Ardene's original music video "The Dividing Line" was featured in Trinity Square Video's installation at Nuit Blanche, Fall 2020.

Ardene considers song composition her calling. She is honoured to be part of this production for The Toronto Fringe Festival 2022.